I DREAM OF HOME.

When the last red hue of even,
Fadeth from the vault above;
And from out night's dusky curtains
Peep the shining stars I love;
Smiling in their silent marches
Through the clear, pure, azure dome;
In the hush—my spirit wanders,
And I dream—I dream of home!

Though before me blaze the firelight,
Of a cheerful Northern hearth,
Forms there mingle in my fancies,
From the dear land of my birth;
While its sweat and soothing music
Seems to say that while I roam,
Hearts around another fireside
Sadly miss me from my home!

And when slumber gently woes me,
Seals my eyelids with a kiss—
But with magic hand before me
Spreads fresh, glowing fields of bliss,
Yielding to her soft caresses,
Hand in hand with him I roam,
Golden fancies—brief-aureal—
Thus to dream I am at home!

BAPTISM.

In discussing the question; who are the proper subjects of Christian baptism? We shall go upon the principle that the word of God, written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has given us plainly the facts as they exist in the Divine mind on the point in question.

Just as in every case where the inspired word has given us an account of the place where baptism was performed, the reason for choosing it, and the acts accompanying baptism, they have been such as to lead us to an inevitable and incontestable conclusion as to what baptism is,—i. e., immersion in water in the likeness of Christ's burial after his death, and raising up out of it, in likeness, and to express faith in his resurrection—so we shall expect to find the words of the Holy Spirit clearly enabling us to determine who are proper subjects of baptism.

Now we may note that in every place where the Holy Spirit has told us *who are to be baptized*, the qualifications named have been such as incontestably and unmistakably require an act of personal choice and intention, intellectual and moral, on the part of the person to be baptized.

Thus in the statement of the commission in Mark 16:15, 16; the Savior plainly shows that the persons eligible to baptism, are to be old enough to *hear* the gospel preached and *understand* it sufficiently to *believe* it unto justification from sin.

We are aware that this text has been questioned as an interpolation, but, first, it has not evidence enough against it to enable the revisers to set it aside in the latest revision, and second the retaining it by a committee many of whom practice what they call "baptism" of infant children, who can in no reasonable way comply with the condition of faith, is sufficient evidence that the testimony of the text is immutable.

Again in the commission as recorded by Matthew 28:19, 20, whatever may be claimed as to its teaching that Christ looked forward to the conversion of the nations, no Protestant will claim that nations are to be baptized in a lump, as Charlemange baptized them at the edge of the sword, there must be *discipleship*, that is, acceptance of Christ as their teacher, before Christ authorizes the baptism of any soul, and this certainly is utterly impossible to harmonize with the practice of infant baptism.

And, indeed, upon this point, John the forerunner of Christ plainly announced the principle, that personal faith and repentance would be the basis of receiving gospel ordinances and the cherishing of gospel hopes, in his word to the viper-like mass who came to him, "bring forth fruit worthy of a repentant heart," and claim not anything because ye say "we have Abraham to our father.—Luke 3:7, 8.

Again the rule of Peter at Pentecost, that baptism succeeds repentance, Acts 2:38, sustains the proposition that an intelligent mental and moral choice precedes baptism.

This brings us to the second consideration, namely:

In every case where the Holy Spirit tells us the qualification of those who *were baptized*, they were personal believers.

Acts 2:38–42 involves this fact. The fact that Peter says the promise of the Holy Spirit was to their children does not involve its bestowal on infant unconsciousness, for he says, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call," and this certainly implies capacity to receive and heed a call; and when the Spirit would inform us who were baptized under Peter's preaching, it records that "those who gladly received the word were baptized," and there is not even a shadow of a hint that any others were.

Again, in the case of the Ethiopian officer, the especial condition of his baptism was a whole-hearted faith."—Acts 8:37.

Again, at Cornelius' house, the gift of the Holy Spirit was the manifest evidence of eligibility for baptism.—Acts 10:47. The testimony of the whole New Testament is uniform as to the baptism of those who have a personal religious experience only. This testimony is sought to be set aside only by special pleadings, of which we may note two samples.

1. It is claimed that as households were baptized, therefore infants must have been baptized. So far as the *reasoning* goes it amounts to no more than the strength of the unstated premise, that is, unless one would claim that there is never a family in which there is no infant, his *argument* is no stronger than the ratio of exceptions to the rule that every household has an infant. In the case of every baptized household, where the Holy Spirit has seen fit to give us any account of the baptized family, they are, as in the case of the Jailer, (Acts 16:32–34,) those where the "word of the Lord was spoken to all in the house," and "*all* rejoiced believing in God," and thus *no* baptized family which the Lord has *described* to us, had any infant, and it is the height of presumption in the case of any family where the Lord is silent, to infer infant baptism—especially when such an inference contradicts all the requirements that persons believe, repent, and become converted before baptism.

2. In order to justify infant baptism, theologians claim that baptism takes the place of circumcision, and hence is a rite for infants. There are several answers to this claim, *e. g.* It is just as true that the Lord's Supper takes the place of the Passover, and so infants ought to eat it. But no one thinks of taking an infant to the Lord's table. The fact is, neither Christian rite takes the place of the ancient one. Again, as none but males were circumcised, no girl infants could be baptized. Lastly, this circumcision argument is only a human notion—a theological device, to frustrate all the above cited requirements to believe, repent, etc., to become subjects of baptism.

Beloved, let us abide by the simple words of the Holy Spirit, and not tolerate the building of customs and ordinances, on human tradition, and on arguments based on the Spirit's silence, which conflict with what he has spoken.—*Bible Banner*—Editorial.

"PROVE ME."

There is not lacking a certain kind of desire to set the work of the Lord prospering among us. It is not infrequently that we hear a wordy lament over the loss of interest in spiritual things and a lack of power in all our church work. Prayers, both public and private, are not wanting also, in which God is besought to "pour out" his Spirit upon us, that "sinners may be converted." Exhortations in which the brethren are entreated to give themselves with more earnestness to spiritual things are frequent, too.

Why, then, does not the Lord hear and answer? Must it not be that there is some element of sincerity or thoroughness wanting in our expressed desire for a revival of God's work among us? Surely, if we read his word aright, he is not loth to bless his people. It is God himself who laments, far more than we do, over barrenness and spiritual decline. He it is who calls us to "prove" him and see if he will not pour out a blessing, such as we shall not be able to receive it, for lack of room.

Nor need we go far to ascertain in what way we are to prove Him. It is a time-honored text from which we draw our thought; but too often has it been spiritualized away or evaded and made to mean something else. What are the tithes that we are exhorted to bring into his storehouse with which to prove Him? No doubt all will agree that at the time this word was spoken by the prophet Malachi "tithes and offerings" meant the substantial gifts of money and cattle for sacrifice. Israel had fallen away in these things, and had of late neglected to bring their generous gifts to the altar and the due portion of their substance to God's service. God, therefore, complained that they had "robbed" him in these things, and that herein was a reason why their observance of ordinances and the service of their lips brought no blessings from him. Return to me in these things: "Bring again all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me herewith and see if I will not pour you out a blessing."

But surely, some will say, "we are not to buy or bribe a blessing from God with offerings of money and substance." Spiritual blessings must come in answer to spiritual worship. The tithes must be understood as meaning prayers and exhortations and other spiritual service and the observing of ordinances. We are inclined to think that a more literal interpretation of this text is needed, and that a more literal and liberal compliance with its terms would result in an astonishing demonstration of the truth of the promise.

There is a very subtile as well as a very apparent connection between beneficence and spiritual power. One of the first results of the great outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was to open all hearts to all the need of the Church and to empty all purses at the feet of the apostles. One of the chief sins, against which Jesus preached during the period of his earthly ministry, was that of covetousness, or the love of money, the disposition to get and keep, or at least use money for the selfish ends and carnal enjoyments. It was the love of this world that led Demas to go back from following Christ. The early churches were remarkable for their abounding liberality, not alone out of their abundance, but out of their "deep poverty"; we are told that the secret of this surprising grace was that "they first gave themselves to the Lord." The apostle ranks beneficence among the chief graces of the Christian life, and urges that it be an abounding grace. Hear him: "Therefore as ye abound in everything, in faith and utterance and knowledge, and in all diligence and in your love to us, *see that ye abound in this grace also.*" As if he had said that a failure here is a failure in the quality of your other graces. And then (as there is the closest connection between beneficence and spirituality) he urges the example of our Lord Jesus: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich." And yet further he declares that to such abounding liberality God will make this answer: "God is able to make all grace abound unto you." It is in this connection, also, that we read, "As a man sows so shall he reap," and that such liberality causeth "thanksgiving" and "glory to God," and "prayers." Is not all this the account of revival and intense spiritual life?

Verily, we think that a little close study into this matter will convince the most skeptical that our prayers and our faith and our utterance are all in excess of our beneficence. "To do good and communicate" is something which the apostle says is the spiritual fulfilling of the second table of the law; and he charges that this we "forget-not," as though there was a strong tendency to make "the sacrifice of our lips" stand for the whole of acceptable worship. If words and prayers, and exhortations would send out missionaries, build churches for the new Western towns, supply teachers for the Freedmen and poor colored people of the South, pay off the mortgages which disgrace the cause of Christ, and disfigure—to the mind's eye—the houses of worship which we have dedicated to his name, and put more bread into the mouths of the missionaries on our frontier, and more and better clothes on their and their children's backs, and, in a word, supply the crying needs in connection with the practical and working force of the Church, then would the Kingdom of God come among us. But alas! it is true, that while there is abundance of this kind of grace in the Church, there is a sad poverty of "tithes and offerings" in the treasury of the Lord. To see the mass of pennies and other small coin in the collection plates that are passed among the well dressed and bejeweled Christians who worship in the Lord's house is saddening.

That there are noble and generous givers in the Church we have to acknowledge and thank God for; but that the great mass of those who profess his name have never learned how to abound in "this grace also" is sadly true. That the giving on the part of those who do give, in most cases, is not proportionate with their means and their own self indulgence is also true. We could name many a Christian man whose yearly benevolence does not equal his half-yearly cigar bill; and many a Christian woman whose annual gifts to the Lord's work does not equal her kid glove expenditure; many a young man whose gifts are not equal to the amount he spends on an occasional concert and opera, to say nothing of a hundred other amusements with which he indulges himself; and any number of young ladies in the Church of Christ who spend annually twice as much for caramels and bonbons as they give outright to the cause of Christ. And it goes without saying that the scale of expenditure in all manner of living indulged in by the average Christian of to-day is altogether out of proportion to the scale of their beneficence. Moreover, we make no doubt it is true that the cases are in the minority where the cause of God is considered "first," and self and indulgence is provided for afterward. At best, in how many cases is our giving up to the line of real sacrifice? We do not mean the sacrifice of superfluous luxuries, but up to the line of sacrifice in things which we might class as necessities. How few in the Church have made an approach to the grace that was in Christ, "who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor"? Surely in this matter of "tithes and offerings," if we will but look deep enough and honestly enough, we doubt not might be found one reason why the "windows of heaven" are not more often opened and a blessing poured out. In other words, tried by this practical test, will it not be found that there is a sore lack of real self-denial among us? And yet, if we will be His disciples, we must deny ourselves, take up his cross and come after him. Who will stand the trial by bringing in all the tithes and offerings?—*Independent.*

ABSTINENCE FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS.

The child of God should have a large and bold way of looking at things,—standing fast in the liberty wherewith Christ maketh free. We should be able to discern between what is essential and non-essential in conduct. He sees, for example, with Paul, that what we eat does not commend us to God, nor what we abstain from. Walking in the statutes of the Lord, he is a privileged character. Still, love that is strong and manly, love that has carried us up out of rules to principles, will always take upon itself the limitations of the ignorant and those yet in bondage. Love lives and acts, not in view merely of the strong, well-knit characters, the enlightened and progressive ones, but of the impetuous, the hot-blooded, the unreasonable, and those who have come to Christ sore wounded and hard beset with temptations. We sit down to the feast of good things that our father has provided with an unanxious and free heart; but in the spirit of the Master we are ready to rise from the feast, gird ourselves and enter menial service. When we are free to all things we become servants to all men. Now, the highest service we can ever render some persons is to take a sympathetic interest in their difficulties, out of which we long since came. The shepherd has to go in at the same door with the sheep. Hence it is that the modern Christian makes rules for himself not laid down in the scripture, or adopts a custom already existing in regard to things in themselves neutral. *Whatever is not of faith is sin.* This principle covers a large part of our actions. *To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not,* to him the omission of known duty is sin. This covers another large part of conduct. Again, *love worketh no ill to his neighbor.* Love alone can assure us what we have a right to do; it surrenders its rights freely. But only as we feel that we are bought with a price, and own nothing in ourselves, can we become living sacrifices. He whom we may injure by our loveless liberty is our brother, for whom Christ died; in destroying the brother, we so far destroy the work of Christ in his behalf.

"Wherefore if food maketh my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend. It is good neither to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended or made weak." This is a warrant for a temperance pledge, for taking extreme positions publicly, as to meats and drinks. Our own personal needs, dangers and privileges,—this is not the thing in question. Are we free in regard to our observance of the Lord's day, the attendance upon the theatre, the use of intoxicating drinks. On Paul's ground we are free, and yet we are not free; we may have no scruples so far as our own conduct goes, but we surrender our rights and become bound. We are not free to do on the Sabbath day what of itself would work us no injury. It might work us no harm to walk or ride for pleasure on the Sabbath; but observing the enormons increase of Sabbath-breaking we will stay in quiet at home.

To live without reproach is not enough. The fallen and weak need to know our absolute freedom from what tempts them.—*Rev. Edward N. Packard.*

If we set ourselves to watch the Lord's dealings with us, we shall often be able to detect a most beautiful correspondence and proportion between each individual "chastening," and its own resulting "afterward." The habit of thus watching and expecting will be very comforting, and a great help to quiet trust when some new chastening is sent; for then we shall simply consider it as the herald and earnest of some new "afterward."—*Havergal.*

Too many have no idea of the subjection of their temper to the influence of religion, and yet what is changed if the temper is not? If a man is as passionate, malicious, resentful, sullen, moody or morose after his conversion as before it, what is he converted from or to?—*John Angell James.*

Courage is sure to abound where love is fervent.

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